



Bandwagonette

Ween Machine Wants It All

Squeal

Scrape

Writhe,



Genre-Indifference . Issue 1

September 13th, 2025 Volume 1

Ween is a band that has captivated me for months. I've known about them for a while, but it was only last year that I listened to *The Mollusk* (the album which is considered their magnum opus). And this past May, I became truly obsessed.

I've watched dozens of Ween interviews on YouTube. Most Some of them are done by interviewers who ask stupid questions. But eventually, one interviewer will ask a question that generates a revealing answer (even if that question is also stupid). I would like to divert your attention to a Ween interview from September 16th, 1997.



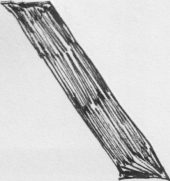
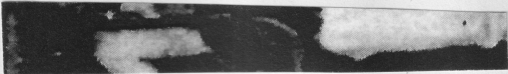
Ween is interviewed by two men named Jay and Jocko Hedblade. They discuss *The Mollusk* (of course), prior collaborations, creative processes, and (most interestingly) **genre and concept albums.**

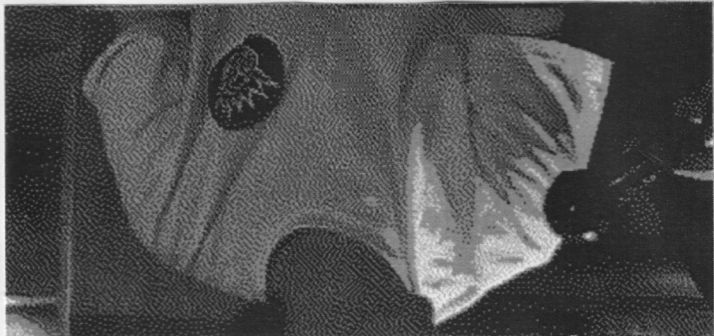


Ween is sort of a wildcard when it comes to genre. They frequently switch between genres, but the approach is more unpredictable. Other artists might flip between genres over several records, but Ween flips between genres over several songs in one record, sometimes flipping genres in one song.

Throughout the interview, Ween's genre switching is acknowledged by the boys, however it's important to note that they deny *intention* behind the genre switching, and, maybe even more interestingly, authorial intent.

Later, they get to talking about their 1996 country album, *12 Golden Country Greats*. Jocko proposes that they should do a 70's soul record, and asks if they're influenced by that kind of music (apropos of "Freedom of '76"). The response to the question is kind of tense.

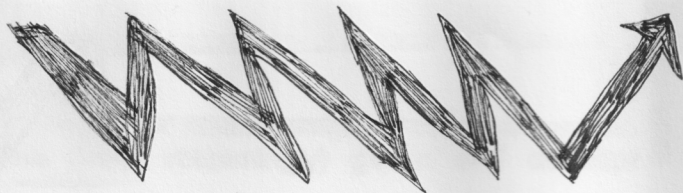




Gene Ween says, "we listen to pretty much everything, every kind of style of music. As long as it's good. The country record was the last thing we'll do like that. So if we do a record that sounds like a 70's soul record, then it will. Or if it doesn't or whatever..."

"We're not going to ever set out to do a..." Dean grumbles, not finishing the thought.

Jocko's tone gets confrontational. "Why was it such a bad experience? Why was the country thing such a bad deal?"



But here's the kicker. Take it, Deaner.

"It's not the country...I think it sends sort of mixed signals, actually. We don't sit down and say we're going to make a soul song, and we're going to make a metal jam or, you know what I mean? We just write songs and whatever. We're not going to toss them because they're this or that or whatever. We picked the best songs, like we said. And with that record, it was just an opportunity to go do this great thing. But I think it makes people think that we just are always jumping from this style to that style because we can...I really hate bands that are smart like that."

Dean goes on to explain that he felt the record was interpreted by some to be a parody of country music. But in reality, it was an earnest attempt to just make something good. "Like, we're trying to just make a record in Nashville with all these old guys, you know?"



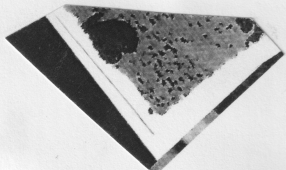


So, what do we do with this? Why am I so fixated on a small fragment of some insignificant interview with a band that stopped being relevant years ago (if Ween was ever relevant at all)?

I think this moment spells out *why* Ween does genre switching, if there's such a lack of intention. It's because they have *genre-indifference*.

Genre-Indifference is not Genre-Blindness, nor is it a lack of passion for genre. Nor is it even apathy for genre, however similar apathy and indifference may seem. *Nor is it a disavowal or absence of genre.*

Genre-Indifference occurs when an artist lacks concern for genre. They don't care about upholding the genre(s) which they've been situated with. They don't care about the defined, rigid boundaries within music that genre creates.





The indifference lies in that genre isn't considered in the creative process. The artist is indifferent towards genre. This allows for the manipulation, distortion, subversion, experimentation, or switching of genre(s) to transpire. Genre-Indifference invokes fluidity within an artist's output.

Ween isn't ground-breaking and revolutionary when it comes to genre, of course not. However, the way they've played with genre has resulted in some incredible art. Some incredible, intensely weird, sometimes very unmarketable art.

These qualities are good or bad, depending on who you are. But I personally love when shit is weird and unmarketable. It speaks to me.



Bandwagonette is an experimental, short-form version of her sister zine, ***Bandwagon***. In this quarter-zine series, each issue focuses on one artist, band, album, song, genre, place, or event. It's all music related and all authored by No Zines.

Quotes from the interview have been edited for clarity. I omitted the gratuitous use of "you know?" "um" and "like".

No Zines is a connoisseur of weird and unmarketable shit.

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